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Namaste 2010

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NAMASTE

a student human rights journal
2010

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

Namaste (nah-mah-STAY) is a Hindi word meaning, the Spirit in me meets the same Spirit in you. It is a South Asian greeting, origination in India that is used for hello and goodbye. The greeting is commonly accompanied by a slight bow made with the hands pressed together, palms touching, in front of the chest. This is a well-recognized symbolic gesture in which one hand represents the higher, spiritual nature, while the other represents the worldly self. By combining the two, the person making the gesture is attempting to rise above their differences with others, and connect themselves to the person he/she bows to. The bow is symbolic of love and respect.

This journal is meant to promote the study of human rights at the University of Connecticut and is to serve as a venue for recognizing and displaying great academic achievements of undergraduate students in this field of study.

Recognizing the work being done within the human rights community at the University of Connecticut will foster an environment that promotes mutual respect. More than that, it is hoped that this ideal will be embraced by University community members and translated in various ways and works to the larger global community.

FOREWORD

The institutionalization and struggles over human rights have made us aware of two significant issues. Human rights are dynamic, they are, and have been, imagined and claimed by different people in a variety of ways, in different contexts. The emphasis on individuals' rights to live lives of human dignity also makes us conscious of the ways in which we are connected to everyone else. Our own rights cannot be achieved by ignoring the costs others pay for our privileges. Being committed to human rights involves thought and action, making sure, as Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore wrote in the early 20th century, that we build a "...world (that) has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls."

This issue of the Namaste journal, which bring together writings on Argentina, Australia, Bolivia, Dominican Republic, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Iraq, Iran, Israel, South Africa, Uganda, and UAE reflects human interconnections. The underlying themes of right and responsibilities within a global society encapsulates the principles of namaste (I honor myself by honoring the spirit in you).

The authors and editors of this journal are some of the finest students at our university. I have had the privilege to teach some of them and they have pushed me to think beyond my "box." Their passion and commitment to human rights are evident on every single page. Collectively they continue to bring less visible people and their issues within our visions.

Professor Bandana Purkayastha
Department of Sociology and Asian American Studies Institute

EDITOR'S NOTE

From the Clothesline Project for domestic violence awareness to the Human Rights Institute's annual conference, the human rights presence on this campus is astounding in its variety and reach. The vitality of our community and its work is solely due to the passion, energy and dedication of its students and faculty. As editors of this fifth volume of the Namaste journal, we are honored to be a part of this rich dialogue produced by the University of Connecticut.

When composing ideas for this issue's vision, our desire was to showcase how fellow students have responded to and experienced human rights concerns. The pieces gathered here show the developed understanding of worldwide human rights issues, whether it be through personal experiences or academic work, while still sharing common roots as UConn students. They show how human rights affects people on our campus, in our country, and in our world. While our peers have witnessed these events and reacted with their work as shown here, it is our duty as readers to respond with equal vigor.

Most of the following works present situations that have not been rectified, ranging from environmental rights in Ecuador and Ethiopia to indigenous rights in Australia. The theme of this volume evolved on its own: questioning the relationship between rights and responsibilities. By looking at the photograph on our front cover depicting the Tibetan prayer flags, for example, we see a celebratory and compassionate insight into a nation that has a history of unrest and injustice. This and the majority of this edition show the need for peaceful reaction and the responsibilities we share from us as global citizens. While reading this journal, I hope you look to the front cover and remember the words of the fourteenth Dalai Lama:

"Peace can only last where human rights are respected, where the people are fed, and where individuals and nations are free."

Stefanie Smith
Editor-in-Chief

Goodbye Mr Zapata
HAMI GOLDBAYANI

AUTHOR'S NOTE: This poem was written by Sa'di Golbayani and translated by Zohreh Exiri. Not too long ago, Sa'di Golbayani was a student of Mechanical Engineering. But he gave it up and continued his studies in English Literature and Accounting at Tarbiat Modarres University in Tehran.

Golbayani is an experimental poet. In form and language what he writes never conforms with how he writes it. He believes that literary creativity is not achieved unless the writer, while trying to know his literary tradition, rebels against it and through a dialectic process creates a new synthesis from with what he has inherited.

His first book of poetry, *The Leper, The Piper, And The Wind*, was published in 2009. He writes critiques on poems in Iranian journals. He is also a member and a founder of the *Vazna Poetry Magazine*, a magazine dedicated especially to poetry in Iran. He is now preparing his second collection for publication.

The poem is dedicated to Elia Kazan.

Sometimes some sand pierces in your shoe heel
and a man in Mexico
with an impenetrable countenance says:
Zapata, Emiliano Zapata
sometimes you turn your foot
to remove the sand from your shoe
and six bullets one after another
shoot the man in the lungs
sometimes while shooting some sand
at the shopkeeper up the alley, you say
hey, oldie, you were OK, better now?
And someone in a plain shuts the eyelids of a corpse:
Zapata is alive
Right today he's seen in the mountain.

گاهی سنگریزهای در پاشنه‌ی کفشات فرو میرود
و مردی در مکزیک
با چهرهی نفوذناپذیر میگوید:
زاپاتا، امیلیونو زاپاتا
گاهی پایت را برمگردانی
سنگریزه را از کفشات در آری
و شش گلولهی پی در پی
به ششهای مرد شلیک میشود
گاهی حین شوت کردن یک سنگریزه
به مغازه دار سر کوچه می گویی
هی پیری خوب بودی بهتری؟
و کسی در جلگهای پلکهای جنازهای را می بندد:
زاپاتا زنده است
او را با اسبش همین امروز در کوه دیده‌اند

Red Dirt Crossroads, Tororo market Uganda
Journal Entry; July 2008
REBEKAH MCMAHON

Condensation settles over the dusty ridges of my glass Coca-cola bottle while numerous bubbles float within. The white, green striped straw moves up, up and up until it must be pushed back down. The cola is cool and moist, but everything else is hot and dry.

We have taken a break from the hustle bustle of market to relax upon upturned buckets at the entrance to a small shop, which sits on the corner of a red dirt crossroads. The stoop glistens wet but not clean as muddy water runs off down the deeply entrenched russet roadside. Its heavy clay odor blends with the spicy sweat that lingers on the air. A bent woman wrings her rag, strong hands working well. While colorfully dressed women with babies strapped to their backs wander by with an aimlessly focused gait. The babies peer around from their perches curious, or sleep sticky against their mother's hard bodies.

The heat makes me lazy, and my mind drifts. I wonder how the women manage to tie the babies up like that. The lesu is only a rectangular piece of fabric, but even very young Ugandan girls can expertly tie a baby in one. It looks like a hammock worn across the shoulder. Lesu can also make up a large part of women's attire. They are used as baby holders, head wraps and skirts. I've even used mine as a blanket on cold nights. They are lovely, loosely woven and died with rich patterns.

A crippled boy pulls himself across the road towards the bustling innards of market. I watch him nervously wondering if I should jump up to help him. Would he except my help, or be angry with me?

I don't know how to act, and so I do nothing.

The boy is covered in mud, and his shriveled, useless legs drag behind him as his hands strain for traction on the compacted road. People on bikes and on foot just move around him without noticing. A small Toyota swerves past tooting its horn.

Mama Immaculate slurps up the last of her cola with satisfaction. She stands up slowly, taking her time; her left hand protectively cups the slight bulge of her stomach unconsciously. And I see in her face a look that mirrors my thoughts, "please god, let this one live."

My cola remains mostly full. I don't actually like cola, but it is safer than the water. With no water treatment plants here, it is very

unhealthy to drink unfiltered water. Cholera has broken out nearby. Cholera spreads through contaminated water supplies; many people will get sick and die. Already nine have died in Mbale and three here, in Tororo.

Immaculate returns her empty bottle to the shopkeeper. I notice the swirling white signature words have long since faded away. The bottles are taken back to the factory and refilled. And so when you purchase a soda on the street the vendor will turn over a bucket for you to sit on and open the bottle saying "sit! Sit!" while he sticks a colorful straw into it. Then you must drink the whole soda while talking to the vendor and watching the people pass by. In the States everything is rush! rush! and disposable. But not here, here you have to return the bottle so that it can be used once again, the next time someone finds that they are thirsty while on a sweltering walk through market.

"Do they wash them first?" I think to myself; staring at my own beverage, it must be over a decade old. I try to guess how many people could have come into contact with it in so many years. Then I shrug my shoulders and swat lazily at a noisy fly... I am too thirsty to care about clean bottles. I have changed so much since arriving.

It's Hot!

Mama looks ready to move on. I stand. A small group of children hang at the door, staring. The children love to harass me.

But it is a fine thing.

To hear them shout "Muzungu! Muzungu! How are you?!", as they swarm around makes my heart sing. Immaculate tries to shoo them away. But they laugh at her gorgeous smile which tells them she isn't being fierce.

We venture out in search of avocados... dodo... a little cabbage... whatever looks best and fresh. The smell of hot oil and charcoal carries me to the chapoti vendors. A pack of pattering feet follows behind...

Muzungu...muzungu!

Vendors shout loudly waving colorful ware, hoping the white women
will turn their way

Child on Stoop, Batey Mosquito
Taken May 2007
CHELSEA KROMBEL

PHOTOGRAPHER'S NOTE: Bateys are rural Dominican villages owned by sugarcane companies and populated mostly by Haitian immigrants who work to harvest sugarcane in the surrounding fields. Haitians that flee the destitution in their own country often seek work and housing in the bateys, only to become trapped in a cycle of insufficient wages and healthcare, minimal or no educational opportunities, and company control of everything down to their food and available drinking water. Adding to the struggles of the people living in the bateys is the problem of documentation. Many batey children of Haitian immigrants—though born in the Dominican Republic—never receive the proper birth certificate, and therefore are never recognized as citizens of either country.



Fresh Water Crisis: the Situation Facing Humanity's Most Vital
Resource
MICHAEL PARKS

In the twentieth century, global water usage increased more than six times the rate of population growth. Despite what may seem to be a positive ratio towards fighting one of the world's greatest environmental risks to health, a significant amount of the world's developing nations face immense health issues due to a lack of fresh potable water (WHO, HELI). The continent of Africa, the country of Yemen, and the better parts of southern Asia including India, Pakistan, Nepal and Bangladesh, suffer the most deaths per million due to unsafe water, sanitation and hygiene. Although there was an increase in water usage, the increase was due to industry and agriculture, which when combined use 90 percent of the world's fresh water. In addition to these deprived regions, the country Jordan has one of the lowest levels of water resource availability per capita, which has brought the importance of water resource management to the attention of its top governmental and health officials (WHO, Jordan).

Additionally, there have been predictions in recent research that foresee as much as two thirds of the world's population could suffer as a result of water deprivation by 2025. In 29 countries across the globe, more than 450 million people are currently confronted with a severe lack of fresh water (Svadlenka). While the world's current population is 6.8 billion, it is expected to gain an additional three billion by 2025, which will require 20 percent more fresh water than what is currently available (Svadlenka). Current estimates by UNESCO show that given the world's current rate of consumption, the world will surpass the current available fresh water on the planet in 2025. Meaning that while many areas of the world, particularly in the northern hemisphere, will have an abundance of water, a significant amount of the population in the southern hemisphere will be faced with immense scarcity of this vital resource ("Lack of Fresh Water Challenges to Sustainability"). The emergence of similar data has brought the issue of water scarcity to the attention of government and environmental officials the world over, thereby urging cross-professional and cross-national cooperation in an effort to curb mismanagement and to more efficiently supply water to those who are without and in danger of going without in the coming decades.

As should be the case with any resource, management that is proper, fair, and efficient should serve as the top priority. Historically, going as far back as Greek and Roman times the management of water was left to the confines of government who deemed it a common resource that should be shared and made available to all (FLOW, Olson). However, the past decade has seen a shift in water

management into the hands of huge, private, multi-national water companies like Suez, Vivendi, and Thames Water, who provide water on a for-profit basis (FLOW, Barlow). Although some developing countries hand over their waterworks to multinationals in light of foreseen benefits, the majority are being forced to hand over their waterworks through coercion tactics. For example, in 1997 the World Bank reprimanded the Bolivian government to privatize their water or they would be cut off from water development loans supplied to them through the World Bank funds (FLOW, Shultz). In 1999, Bolivia gave in to the pressure of the World Bank and privatized the water-works in the cities of El Alto and Cochabamba.

One may ask why a nation would semi-voluntarily hand over its water supply to a private company rather than keep it in the hands of the government. However, as is the case with Bolivia, many nations are too poor to allocate the necessary funds to their water management systems. These countries use outdated or lack entirely the basic infrastructure to deliver water in an efficient manner to their rural populations. As an outcome, it seems more feasible to have a private company come in to take over the water supply (typically funded by world organizations like that of the World Bank, World Health Organization, and the United Nations Children's Fund). Moreover, in impoverished places where water may be contaminated or inadequate for drinking, sanitation and hygiene, a change in management to a wealthy, private, multinational water company is often welcomed by the people.

This initial approval by the people is due to promises on behalf of multinationals stating that they will bring adequate, clean, fresh, water to all in need. Unfortunately in the case of the people in the Bolivian city Cochabamba, this sense of approval turned to cold disdain when the U.S. based transnational corporation, Bechtel, took over after only several weeks. Subsequent to the Bechtel take over, the people of Cochabamba were forced to pay up to 25 percent of their monthly wage to the company, when they already live off of a monthly income equivalent to 60 U.S. dollars. This resulted in constant riots in the streets, which became known as water wars (Bechtel). The people of Cochabamba's extreme persistence, supported by a court order for Bechtel to vacate the country, saw to the quick exit of the company after only eight months.

In the face of negative mismanagement and exploitation on the part of multinationals in developing nations, international organizations like the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization (WHO) have stepped up their efforts

to assist in providing and managing the fresh water supplies for drinking, sanitation, hygiene, and agriculture. Overall, these efforts regrettably impact only a fraction of the people who are in need of water. In places where government is powerful and its citizens enjoy a certain level of comfort, such as the western world, the responsibility is often put in the hands of government officials. However, as an individual one needs to start shouldering some of this responsibility. The single most direct way an individual can improve the world's water issue is through the altering of one's personal water consumption behaviors. After all, it has been through carefree, thoughtless, and passive behaviors of mostly the western industrialized nations that has brought the planet to its current fresh water crisis.

In several parts of the world numerous projects involving advanced technology and humanitarian organizations are underway to ensure a decrease in the void between those with plenty versus those with very little fresh water. The United Nations launched its Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) initiative in 2001, which include the following: eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, gender equality, universal primary education, improvement of maternal health, reduction of child mortality, combat of major diseases including AIDS and malaria, and environmental sustainability ("Millennium Development Goals"). The MDGs initiative is a massive cooperation between many nations and international organizations including UNICEF and WHO, whose goal is to halve the 2001 percentage of those without potable water by 2015.

UNICEF recognizes water as an integral part of a child's fundamental rights. Therefore, UNICEF enacted its WASH (water, sanitation, and hygiene) programs, which ensures an adequate standard of living while receiving the highest attainable level of health care. These programs have been enacted to guarantee that the MDGs are indeed achieved by 2015. It is the belief of UNICEF that in the absence of "significant improvements in water and sanitation access and hygiene practices the MDGs related to child mortality, primary education, disease reduction, environmental sustainability and poverty eradication will not be achieved" (UNICEF). Similar to the model of UNICEF, the World Health Organization initiated a program known as Health and Environment Linkages Initiative (HELI), which was designed to take on the challenges of many environmental related health issues one of them being the replenishment of water. In fact they have deemed the issue of water, sanitation, and hygiene to be one of their top priority risks (WHO, HELI).

Taking a more technological approach in finding better water delivery solutions is Ashok Gadgil. Gadgil is a senior staff scientist at the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory and has put his efforts into solving the water crisis in the state of Bomminampadu, India. In this state a total of 70,000 people died in 2007 due to filthy drinking water. Gadgil, aware of the MDGs set for 2015, realized that achieving these goals depends on a more efficient method to supply water to people in rural areas. Given the enormous costs of money and time needed to pipe water from a centralized area to a rural village, current methods are inefficient and not conducive to the desired goals (FLOW, Gadgil). Using UV light, which aids in the killing of bacteria and pathogens in water, he developed a system called the Ultra-Violet Purification Center: the water is first pumped from a water source nearest to the village into the treatment center, where it then flows under UV light rays, and subsequently through filters. The treatment center can be maintained by people in the community, so there is no interference of private water companies. The money used by the villagers to purchase the water, equivalent to 2 U.S. dollars a year, provides the necessary revenue to pay the people from the community who run the center. In the words of Gadgil, "It [the water plant] becomes a financially viable self-sustaining model of how a community can pay for safe drinking water" (FLOW, Gadgil).

As water diminishes, so too does the human species. Despite an obvious need for fresh potable water many people are left instead to cope with dirty, disease infested water for drinking, sanitation, and hygiene. Because of two centuries worth of disregard and neglect, mostly on behalf of western industrialization, many people in developing countries are presently paying a price. It is time to follow the lead of scientists like Ashok Gadgil and to think outside the box in search of new methods to solving old and contemporary problems. The people of developing nations are sick and dying because they lack adequate clean water. I invite you to take on the challenge of the world's fresh water crisis along with scientists and organizations like WHO and UNICEF. One need not be a scientist or engineer to assist in the fight; have more responsibility and regard for our fellow global inhabitants and Mother Nature. Political boundaries, economics, culture, and religious ideals divide humanity to the point that one often succumbs to the illusion that people in developing areas lack a connectedness with the developed world. However, strip away these partitions that divide and the irrational illusion fades: what is revealed to us is that the entire human species is indeed interconnected. We all

call Earth home and all share a need for fresh clean water to survive. The next time you leave the water on while brushing your teeth or treat yourself to a half hour shower, ask yourself, "Am I doing my part to help fight the world's fresh water crisis?"

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Washed By Rain
MARIE ANZALONE

AUTHOR'S NOTE: During the Guatemalan civil war, 626 native villages were wiped out by state sponsored scorched earth and genocide campaigns. Soldiers—trained, funded, and backed by the US government—took villagers at gunpoint and conscripted them as "workers" in the fight against the elusive guerilla army, purportedly hiding in the highlands. Any villages suspected of aiding the guerilla were burned to the ground, and the citizens massacred in notably brutal fashion. I tried to write from the perspective a conscripted villager called upon to murder his neighbors. Today, the brutality of 20 years ago is marked most profoundly by the refusals of anyone to talk about what was done.

el sol llora para nosotros esta tarde
[the sun weeps for us this afternoon]

and all the laundresses in the land could haul these muddied shirts
up to the washing place, and scrub them on the rocks until their
knuckles bleed
yet still not remove those stains we put on them today.

a blouse, just the width of a man's spread fingers, palm flat, as if to
strike a blow,
the blow we do not dare turn on the ones holding rifles
to our machete wielding forms and figures.

Figures, then, silhouetted in flames, and another blouse, split up the
front, in slices
newly embroidered with a fresh application of fine scarlet along the
jagged seam,
its owner's unborn prize taken as a token of our passing.

Dios nos perdona manana, por lo que hizo hoy
[God forgive us tomorrow for what we did today]

I wrap these images and sounds and places now in silence so deep
three generations will not make me speak, ever, of the burning chapel
smell
because the mind slips sideways when a man beholds the
crookedness.

I learned today a knife carves arms like cornstalks, splits abdominals
like a gourd skin
into this, the land of maize and trees, were we led by los locuras-
as men asked to do murderer's deeds, for our state long after it
abandoned us-

and I keep a remnant of a charred anciano's shirt, solely for
remembrance
that you never know what you can do until demanded by
a uniformed soldado
holding a torch to your home and a knife to her throat.

Their work here is done, and the ashes settle into the afternoon sky
soon the seasonal evening rains will wash the hallowed ground clean

because when survival is tantamount, you no longer care that your side is right.

solo cuida lo que permita que exista un otro dia.
[you only care for what lets you exist another day]

I will ask my wife to take these pants to the laundry stone to fade the stains-

and pray they never think that we support the guerilla here, but will tell my children

about the place I know they can run to, just in case.

There is now a field of loose dirt in what used to be the neighbor's town

and there are probably none who will ever think to look there, again-

for any trace of the living.

Children's Peace Monument, Hiroshima, Japan
Taken 2009
KERRI FENTON

PHOTOGRAPHER'S NOTE: The Children's Peace Monument was erected to honor all of the children who died as a result of the atomic bombing. Based on the story of Sadako Sasaki who was exposed to the atomic radiation at age two and developed leukemia as a result ten years later, the monument honors her strive to make 1000 paper cranes. The glass cases are filled with thousands of paper cranes from people around the world in support of peace.



Oil Exploitation in the Ecuadorian Amazon
WILLIAM B. SMITH

From the jungles of Ecuador to the oil fields of Alaska, there has been no limit to mankind's reach for the cheap, addictive hydrocarbon known as crude oil. Excessive drilling in pristine natural lands by such large oil companies as Texaco and Exxon supply industrial nations with billions of barrels of cheap crude oil every single day. A large percentage of oil consumed in this nation comes at a great cost. Not to us personally, but to the environment from which the oil has been extracted. Out of sight, oil businesses have drilled for crude petroleum under limited ecological regulations, encouraging many to act irresponsibly towards the environment, especially if the oil extraction is done in third world countries.

Many people adopt an equally careless mentality, believing that "if it's not taking place in my backyard, then the means by which oil is derived really doesn't matter." The truth is that it does matter, if not to the environment then to the people who are displaced from their homes by reckless extraction. The Huaorani tribe of Ecuador are victims of this reckless mentality. The Huaorani make their home in the Ecuadorian Amazon. Over the past decade, they have suffered the effects of pollution and toxins from the oil industry's careless extraction of petroleum in their land, penetrating everything from the air the Huaorani breathe to the water they use to drink and bathe. Non-regulated oil drilling operations have plowed their way into the diverse ecosystem of their land and threaten the extinction of not only animals, but other indigenous people who call the Ecuadorian Amazon their home as well.

The Ecuadorian Amazon is one of the most pristine and diverse ecosystems in the world. It is home to more than ten percent of the world's species, as well as several indigenous groups including the Huaorani (Betterly, 2007:1). Conversely, Ecuador is also home to a government that relies on oil exports to provide nearly fifty percent of their export profits, dominating the country's national budget (Beezley, 2007:226). Ecuador has been overwhelmed by the political economics of oil ever since it struck the first well in 1972. Ecuadorians were convinced that oil would somehow bring wealth and happiness to everyone in their country, regardless of its impact on the rain forest, forcing native peoples to choose between their nation's economic prosperity or industrial activity that would threaten their subsistence and cultural life (Sabin, 1998:146).

The oil industry and large-scale companies like Texaco have caused massive damage to the environment, stripping the Ecuadorian Amazon of its life: human, plant, and animal. Ecuador's government has made several deals with foreign oil companies, granting them drilling

rights in areas of Ecuadorian land the size of New Jersey. In order to transport the oil extracted from wells in their various Amazonian territories, petroleum companies have further damaged the environment by building miles of pipelines and access roads across and throughout the dense rain forest. Several of the pipelines and roads travel directly through Huaorani territory, contaminating drinking water, splitting villages, and disturbing hunting grounds. In 1972, Texaco completed construction on a 310-mile pipeline that feeds numerous subsidiary pipes that crisscross throughout the region (Betterly, 2007:2). This expansive network of pipelines and roads presents a substantial threat to the health and well being of the indigenous groups native to the area.

In Ecuador, the extraction of oil alone is responsible for more than five million gallons of toxic waste each day (Beezley, 2007:226). The process of extracting oil produces a sizable quantity of highly toxic water that is discharged into surrounding wetlands and streams. The waste is either pumped into unlined ground pits, or forced directly into the same rivers that the Huaorani use to bathe and drink (Sabin, 1998:150). The oil pits often overflow as a result of heavy forest rains, spilling their contamination into the Amazonian watershed. In an effort to further rid themselves of extraction sludge, oil companies have gone as far as coating the roads they've built in the region with this industrial waste, claiming the method helped "control dust" and leading to even further pollution of the forests with toxic runoff. Their negligence, in this respect, has practically wiped out all signs of life within a significant radius of the numerous uncapped wells.

In addition, a 1992 study of the Cuyabeno Wildlife Reserve found "70 percent of the industry waste pools in poor condition. Over half the wells showed oil spills into the surrounding area" (Sabin, 1998:150). This staggering amount of unchecked industrial damage has had a profound effect on the health and well being of the Huaorani and other native groups of the Amazon. The high concentration of toxins present in both air and water has caused miscarriages, birth defects, and cancer rates that are three times the national average in the areas surrounding drilling sites. "Cows and chickens have reportedly dropped dead; fish have gone belly up. Mothers and children walking on the oil soaked dirt roads have to wash their feet in gasoline just to remove the gunk" (Maass, 2007:2). The irresponsible actions of oil companies, along with the negligent attitude of Ecuador's government, has damaged one of the world's most diverse ecosystems and brought misery to the people who call it their home.

In spite of attempted stop measures, companies like Texaco continue to forge through the ancestral lands of the Huaorani in search of oil. In 1993, a class action lawsuit was filed against Texaco, requesting \$1.5 billion in damages for environmental damage to the Amazon and its people (Beezley, 2007:226). This step, along with several additional lawsuits against big oil companies, has put companies like Texaco in the international spotlight. Unfortunately, punitive damages are long in arriving, as many environmental agencies litigating on behalf of the Huaorani do not have the money to compete with the Fortune 500 companies in a legal setting. Cases can be deliberately kept in litigation by the oil companies until environmentalists run out of funds. Fortunately though, the pressure produced by negative attention across the globe has forced companies to encourage their Ecuadorian subsidiaries to clean up their act and observe more responsible environmental practices.

The Ecuadorian government, nevertheless, fearing they will lose the commitment of foreign oil investments, remain loyal to the oil industry and their potential profits over environmental protection. The minimal environmental regulations enacted by Ecuador's government to preserve the rainforest are hardly ever enforced. According to Ecuador's President Rafael Correa, dirt was poured over contaminated soil and wastewater ponds to cover up the mess left behind, rather than clean it up (Betterly, 2007:3). A massive \$16 billion debt accrued by the government's unchecked deficit spending against oil revenues, has so buried the country in arrears that it cannot afford to threaten foreign oil corporations' investment dollars, even if they damage the environment with reckless extraction practices (Maass, 2007:4).

The struggle between big oil, the Huaorani, and other native Ecuadorians is of a bittersweet ending. It is projected that Ecuadorian oil reserves will dry up within a decade or two, after the land and its people have been destroyed (Betterly, 2007:5). Big oil companies will pack up and leave with their profits, having essentially decimated the rain forest and poisoned its people. Species of wildlife, plants, and fish will be eradicated from their once pristine ecosystem, as the Ecuadorian Amazon becomes a toxic wasteland created by man in his relentless search for fuel resources. It is critical to the indigenous groups living in the Amazon, that pressure be put on these companies in order to encourage socially responsible drilling. Exploitation of oil is not so much the problem in that the land and its people are permanently damaged, with little remorse or desire to correct environmental harm. Through the courts, the people of the Ecuadorian Amazon, whose lives have been destroyed, may finally achieve justice.

It is my hope that the oil companies, can and will be held accountable for their inappropriate and irresponsible use of the land and its resources.

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Township Political Rally Crowd Control
Taken February 2009
CHELSEA KROMBEL

PHOTOGRAPHER'S NOTE: In April 2009, South Africa held its fourth general election since the end of apartheid. While in Cape Town, I had the opportunity to attend a rally for the majority party, the African National Congress (ANC), in a local township. Townships were established by the apartheid regime as the segregated communities to which non-whites were forced to relocate. Today, the townships remain poor and largely (though not legally) segregated. At the ANC rally, the current president Jacob Zuma stressed the importance of working together to overcome the human rights issues that still plague a majority of South Africans. The police erected barrier fences to keep the thousands of ANC supporters a safe distance from the rally platform. This picture shows several children peering through the fence toward Zuma, who was speaking at the podium.



Court Protest in Wynberg, South Africa
Written February 23, 2009
HANNAH THORNTON-SMITH

On Thursday, the 19th of February, I participated in a lively march with about sixty or seventy other participants of all ages. This march was centered on the issue of a devastating event that occurred in the township of Nyanga last year. A respected man of the community, Mr. Langa, created a drama/dance club for the children of the town. Although this club seemed like a positive outlet for the children's energy, Mr. Langa allegedly sexually abused and raped a number of the children. This despicable behavior caused a great deal of controversy in the town. Rape and sexual abuse is often stigmatized in South African communities and consequently, many of the victims felt pressure to move elsewhere.

Mr. Langa was arrested and released soon after on R2000 bail (about \$200). He was also court ordered to stay away from Nyanga. On these conditions, Mr. Langa was permitted to live freely until further notice. According to the accounts of numerous community members, Mr. Langa disobeyed this simple order and was seen a number of times back in Nyanga. A new court case was set for February 19th to address this issue.

Sonke Gender Justice Network (the non-governmental organization I intern for) has been following this case, in order to show support and demand justice for the children and to put legal pressure on the court to prosecute Mr. Langa for the terrible and unforgivable crimes he has committed. Sonke has been working with a legal advocacy group in order to find out what legal steps should be taken at this point. They have also been working alongside of the South African Civil Organization (SANCO) and the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC).

This endeavor for justice is directly aligned with Sonke's "One Man Can" campaign, in which social ideals of "femininity" and "masculinity" are deconstructed in order to educate men on how to take power over their lives and promote equality, while working to end the spread of HIV, AIDS, STIs and gender-based violence. Sonke speaks out on behalf of men in order to condemn homophobic, sexist, racist and violent behavior and to create a positive voice for men who wish to speak out against damaging "gender norms".

On the day of the march, Steph and I woke up at five in the morning to find our rooms completely dark. We made our way to the train station and arrived at the Sonke office in Cape Town by 7:30 and waited for our co-worker, Mzamo, to arrive. We walked a few blocks down and

took a minibus headed to Nyanga. As we climbed onto the minibus, the driver gave Mzamo a strange look and told him that we must be on the wrong bus. Mzamo chuckled and assured the driver that we knew where we were headed.

We were dropped off on the corner of what seemed like a completely random street, and were told that we were near to our destination. Walking through the streets of Nyanga was a surreal experience. I had passed through the townships in our private traveling seminars bus during orientation week, however, walking among the shacks and poverty-ridden area was quite a different experience. Steph and I received a number of strange looks as we walked through the streets with a curious and bewildered look on our faces.

After a few minutes, we arrived at the town school, Mvulapp. The children seemed very high spirited and ready for action. It was also nice to see the faces of some of our other colleagues outside (Leo and Max). As posters were painted, we packed into three vans. On the ride to Wynberg, the entire van broke out into song. Steph and I clapped and tried to join in wherever we could, with intermittent translations from our coworker, Max. After a few songs, I was pleased to hear a song that I not only recognized, but could also sing along with (a song I had sung a few times at work). The lyrics are as follows:

“One man wants to teach
Wants to teach equality
(Then Max would yell out a number and we each would count down from that number)
Six men, five men, four men, three men, two men, one man wants to teach
Wants to teach equality”

We were dropped off in Wynberg, across the street from the Landdroeskantoor Magistrate’s Court. All of the Sonke and SANCO members huddled with the students, parents and teachers of Nyanga and sang, clapped and danced as the banners were clearly displayed. Some of the messages on the banners included: “No Bail”, “We Demand Justice”, “There are no excuses for child abuse” and “Mr. Langa, you SUCK!”. The entire spectacle was caught on tape by a filmmaker, Billy, an activist who had just come from making a documentary in the Congo. Our presence definitely caught the attention of passer-bys.

After being outside for about thirty minutes, we were told that the adults could enter the court and attend the hearing. The courtroom was packed and after about fifteen minutes, a man with a yellow shirt entered. I was informed that he was the perpetrator. I realized that this was the first time that I encountered a person who I knew had raped someone. I felt a mix of emotions: confusion, anger, disgust and frustration. I thought to myself: how can any legal system allow a man who has raped children walk freely?

I was extremely disappointed when Mr. Langa was finally called to the stand and the court was called to order; the case was postponed until April 7th. Mr. Langa was accused of returning to Nyanga and denied the accusations. The community members we were sitting with were angry and told us that Mr. Langa was blatantly lying to the court.

Back outside, everyone was still lively and vocal. A few minutes later, Mr. Langa brazenly strolled by as shouts erupted from the group of students. Some children even ran into the street towards him, emphatically waving their signs at him. Steph told me that a few of the victims were actually in the crowd (something I was unaware of until that moment). I felt a rush of adrenaline myself and couldn't begin to imagine how these children and their parents must have felt.

Although Mr. Langa walked free from the courtroom, I do not believe that our efforts were in vain. From this march, the children were given a feeling of support and solidarity, and the court realized that there was a demand for justice. Mr. Langa was able to see that he is no longer welcome in Nyanga and will face strong anger if he chooses to go back. Hopefully the message of this march will carry on further than Wynberg and Nyanaga (by way of press and media).

On a global scale, rape and sexual assault have long been contested and controversial issues both within and outside of the courtroom. The process of defining these topics, as well as establishing and proving that a sexual violation actually occurred, has been a great difficulty and deterrent to victims in reporting crimes and in seeking retribution. Attitudes in the community and legislation within the court room greatly shape how sexual victims come to view and deal with the atrocities that have been committed against them.

Within the context of South Africa, the recent shift in the political system to a democracy, with a fundamental emphasis on equality at the

core, has brought human rights issues into the forefront of debate and discussion. These changes, however, are in the beginning stages—although there has been noticeable progress in the attitudes of the people and structure of the government- change does not occur overnight. There is much work to be done in order to strengthen the court system and sway the perceptions of community members. In a case such as this one, when justice is so slow to be served in a seemingly clear cut case concerning the abuse of minors, this point becomes extremely evident. It is the work of non-governmental organizations, such as Sonke, that play a critical role in pushing for protection, peace and justice of its citizens.

Hebron
ADAM EISLER

AUTHOR'S NOTE: Hebron is the second holiest city to Jews next to Jerusalem, and also an extremely holy city to both Jews and Christians. Located in the Southern part of the modern day "West Bank", the city is the site of the Cave of the Patriarchs, a historical site alleged to contain the biblical graves of Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebecca, Jacob, and Leah. The city has changed hands many times over the last few thousand years and has seen much bloodshed. In 1929, sixty-seven Jews were killed with the other members of the Jewish community being wounded and exiled from the city. After the establishment of the state of Israel, the West Bank, including Hebron, was given to the Jordanians until finally in 1967, it was recaptured by the Israelis. A Jewish presence was reasserted in the city though it was overwhelmed by a large Arab-Muslim population.

this one was tired.
what came of that day was what

that one saw: a woman leaning
on the fence, separating her
from the tomb of Leah our Mother, לֵאָה אִמֵּנוּ.
a man
separated
from Hebron 1 & Hebron 2,
screaming at the hard-faced 18-year-old
with a machine gun, the yellow and green flag of the Golani Brigade.

those who have sterilized the streets.

37 sons & daughters of mothers of mothers of mothers were killed
here.
167 sons & daughters of fathers of fathers of fathers were killed here.
Hebron

Abyssinia
CHRISTINA NATALE

"Allahu Akbar—Allaaaaahu Akbar." The Islamic call to prayer was the first welcome I heard when I set foot on this mysterious continent of Africa. After nearly twenty-four hours of travel, I was standing on a dusty street in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. I arrived at sunrise.

They are barefoot. Their feet must be like leather. We stick out like two sore thumbs: the white girl and the "China" man. "China! China!" The children yell after us as we walk down the street. There are so many children. A boy is following me down the street. He looks at me with sad eyes and motions that he is hungry.

I was told not to give them money. Food is okay. He is still following me. Three more children have joined him. A boy and a girl carrying an infant on her back wrapped in a blanket follow closely behind. Ahead, a group of about twenty children surround a stopped car. The driver rolls up the windows and ignores the heartbreak that envelops the city...

Ethiopia is home to an estimated 4.6 million children according to UNICEF's 2007 report. This number is more than 13% of the country's total child population. About half of these orphans lost their parents as a result of AIDS.

Although some of them find their way into private or government-run orphanages, most of the children live their young lives in the street. Their choices often consist of either begging for money, sex-working, or death. To the government, these street children do not exist. They are just an annoyance to the people.

They bombard idling vehicles with outstretched hands and crying babies. They follow anyone who looks like they might have an extra birr in their pocket, and tug on their shirt to remind them that they have not disappeared. To survive, they simply have no other choice than to live off of the kindness and generosity of others.

A woman and her child buy bananas. The little boy looks at his mother and excitedly whispers something in her ear. I am far too conspicuous. I am the only female feranji in all of this small town of Debre Berhan. The boy runs up to me and offers me his hand. I am smiling. I take his hand. "HimynameisNamashnicetomeetyou," he rushes in perfectly taught English as I gently shake his hand. He runs away in embarrassment and hides behind his mother's skirt. She smiles at me and we exchange "Selam's."

It seemed as if Robert and I were the only two Westerners in the city. They had called us “feranjis” and themselves “habeshas.” Generally, the Ethiopians were friendly towards “feranjis.” The natives’ cordiality may have been a result of the country’s history. Every other African nation at one point in time had or has been colonized by an oppressive regime. Benito Mussolini made a forceful effort to colonize Ethiopia just before World War II, but failed. Ethiopia is the only African country without a supremely despotic history.

I had never experienced a place like this. The city provided a constant dichotomy of sights and ideas that shifted between old and new, religious and secular. Goats, camels, and donkeys walked alongside the people on the streets. Traditional dress was contrasted with the latest trends from Paris.

Kelile is driving much too fast for the conditions. It is pouring. The rain is coming down like I’ve never seen it in the States. The windshield wipers don’t work. I have no seatbelt in the front seat. I stick my arm out of the passenger window and try to wipe off the frost collecting on the windshield to allow for Kelile to see the road. He drives so fast. I was once told that Kelile means “my protector” in Amharic. This seems ironic now. He is driving too fast. The road is now a flowing river of mud. It is no longer the dust in my eyes and nose and mouth.

It was the rainy season in Ethiopia and the storms appeared without warning. They blew in as quickly as they blew out. Only farmers and shepherds were able to read the enigmatic clouds and predict when the rain would fall. When it fell, it fell with such force that the rain drops displaced the ground where they landed like miniature atom bombs.

I found myself caught in rainstorms often. It had happened once in the city while I was wandering about, destined for nowhere in particular. I had left my umbrella behind that day. The clear, blue skies of morning had deceived me. Another time, the rain caught me by surprise one afternoon while I was in the highlands. We were miles from the road and no shelter was in sight. Only barley fields and stone walls surrounded us. They did provide any protection. The rain turned into hail. It stung my face as we trudged along the slickening goat path. By the time the storm had ended, my clothes were stuck to my body as if they had been plastered on.



There's an accident up ahead. There is a truck stopped in the road. I see groups of Ethiopian men, the elders perhaps, scarcely dressed in tribal costume. They are looking at something sprawled out on the road. "A camel accident," I'm told. Nineteen camels lay motionless, only two remain with life in their eyes. Where is the driver responsible for hitting these camels? "They killed him on the spot, most likely," Kelile explains, "Out here, the Afar people make their own rules." An eye for an eye, a man's life for another man's livelihood. We drive on in silence.

The *Adansonia digitata* were as beautiful as I had imagined them to be. They are the baobab trees sometimes referred to as devil trees. In Ethiopia, the tree is called "Warka", occasionally titled the Tree of Life. The name suits it well. As we drove for miles and miles to our project site, all that seemed to occupy the dry, hot land of the Great Rift Valley were "Warka" trees, scattered between the numerous Acacias. Menberu explained to me that the tree does not provide the people with wood like Eucalyptus. Its main function is to provide food and water, even medicine. Its trunk is hollow and can store large volumes of water useful in extended droughts. Its fleshy fruit is a surprisingly nutritious food source for such a desiccated environment.

The trees in Ethiopia are endangered. They are cut down by the hundreds every day to supply the energy needed for their everyday necessities. The electricity is too unreliable to sustain a constant assurance that the people will be able to cook their meals or heat their homes. Many Ethiopians living outside of the cities have no access to any standard energy sources at all.

The country is trapped in an ongoing loop of environmental destruction. Ethiopia depends mostly on hydroelectric power. The climate does not supply enough rainwater for the dams to produce enough electricity. As a result, the people must use firewood. Consequently, their land is being stripped bare of all natural forests and vegetation. When the trees are gone, it does not rain. The cycle continues as the people become desperate.

The deforestation also contributes to erosion of the land. Most of the rural people of Ethiopia are farmers or live a pastoral life. They depend on the land to produce their food or to produce the food for their animals. Without the roots of trees to hold the soil in place, the earth has no protection from the elements. The ground dries up, blows away, or washes into the nearest watershed.

The lake is green. A thick film of blue-green algae coats the surface. The people of Lake Koka are weary of our company. They hesitantly answer Menberu's questions regarding the tannery nearby. They do not trust us. They ask us in Oromo, "Why are you testing the water? Why are you here?"

The only people who seem to enjoy our company are the children. They follow us around the lake, kicking their worn out soccer ball as we take water samples. They are fascinated by our cameras. I snap portraits upon their request. They do headstands and laugh. They seem to be the happiest kids alive. They must not know what's in the water...

I had read a lot about Lake Koka before my visit. I had watched heartbreaking news specials on Al Jazeera and listened to despairing testimonials made by the local people. These chronicles would be enough to make any person want to help. The industrialization that had turned Lake Koka into a contaminated, toxic mere was unacceptable. The government was doing nothing to help its people.

When we arrived at the lake, the first thing I noticed was the color, the second was the smell. The water was bright green as a result of the chemicals that had been dumped into the lake. The lake smelled like an infection. It suffers from a nutrient overload of phosphorus and nitrogen caused by the fertilizer runoff of nearby flower farms.

Consequently, the lake was covered with algal blooms. I watched as untreated wastewater, containing heavy metals, such as chromium, flowed into streams that led directly into the lake. The water was undrinkable for the thousands of people who had always depended on it for as long as they had known.

It took us hours to find someone who would speak openly about the problem. Many of the locals were employed by the factories and were scared that we wanted to shut them down. The ones who trusted us enough to talk complained of sickness. Their children were dying and they had no other source of water. They complained about the indifference of the government. What mattered to the government, they told us, was economic growth regardless of the effect it had on people. I felt hopeless.

How can one or two or three Americans change the minds of a foreign government? I wondered when the lives of these human beings, and the quality of these lives, would be a priority. The

government claims that the handful of factories improves the economy and in turn, improves life for the entire nation. Utilitarianism at its finest but will this plan actually do the greatest good for the greatest number of people?

Flying back over Ethiopia, toward a home-cooked meal and a hot shower, I realized that the vast emptiness I had envisioned more than five weeks earlier did not exist. I reflected on the many tribes and cultural groups, the languages, the food, the friendly faces, the beautiful mountain ranges, the desolate valleys once lush with vegetation. I thought of the challenges that Ethiopia is facing. I felt guilty that I was able to hop on a plane and return home to a carefree life while I left behind so many human beings who did not have clean water to drink. Something must be done.

Humanity
DANIELLE ALLEN

The destruction of the world began slowly.

First, he made himself a God,
seeing the world in terms of dollar signs
not living, breathing, beautiful life.
To an elite few He bestowed power,
leaving the rest.

He broke away from nature,
tearing at the roots
of a relationship grown deep,
laughs at those who still found life sacred
echoing through newly barren land.

He scoffed at the future,
seeing only Himself
and the profits made today.
Fed His appetite, ignoring pleas
until there was nothing left to eat.

Then, he began to poison himself
releasing toxins into the air, water, earth
that raced through the veins of
plants, animals, humans
starting at the bottom.

The destruction of the world came fast.

Child Camel Jockeys
ERIN OLEYNEK

In the Persian Gulf states, camels have been of crucial importance in many aspects of life for thousands of years, providing a means of transportation, shelter and food. Besides practical needs, camels also serve entertainment purposes and camel racing has now become a major industry. Racing is most popular in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Because of its large oil reserves, the UAE is one of the most economically developed countries of the Middle East. Abu Dhabi is the capital and second largest city; it is the center for political, industrial and cultural activities, including camel racing. In the UAE there are fifteen racetrack stadiums, housing anywhere from fifteen to seventy camels (Hejaz). Starting as an ancient Bedouin tradition, camel racing is now a multi-million dollar activity, taking a similar form to horse racing: bets are placed and camels race usually a ten kilometer track. Demand for camel racing is on the rise, today there are over 14,000 active racing camels ("The Facts About Child Camel Jockeys"). Ruling families are in charge of the racing and own the camels and the camps, spending millions of dollars on the camels and bets. Because this sport has been around for so long and is popular among those who run the country, it has become a respected and important sport.

Children were and are still today used as jockeys for camel racing. As of 2004, some 40,000 children were working as camel jockeys throughout the Middle East ("Trafficking of Persons"). Most are trafficked illegally from countries such as Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sudan, India, Sri Lanka, and Ethiopia ("Child Camel Jockeys"). In these countries, human trafficking has unfortunately become a sophisticated, well-organized industry. Children are usually abducted, or because of extreme poverty rates, desperate parents many times sell their children to traffickers for as little as 500 U.S. dollars (Child Camel Jockeys: Modern Day Slavery). Children as little as two years old are taken from parents and thrown into the life of a camel jockey. Because they are taken so young, this is all the children know. They are unaware that they have any rights and have no way of fighting back or escaping.

Children live in camps located next to the race tracks called "ozbahs" (Conradi). Life here is almost unthinkable. Surrounded by barbed wire, the jockeys live in iron huts where they sleep on the floor, many times with temperatures well over one hundred degrees. They are beaten and tortured, suffering physical and sexual abuse. There is record of children being tied to chains and left in the desert, beaten with metal rods and leather whips, cut with blades or raped by their owners (Selby). Weight must be kept to the bare minimum, so

the children are only allowed to eat up to three biscuits a day plus water; the optimum weight is thirty-three pounds ("Child Jockeys," 2004). If they are gaining weight or cannot lose weight, they are starved further, sometimes given salt water to drink.

Work is eighteen hours a day, and if the small children cannot keep up with this, for example if they fighting back or are unable to stay awake, they are given a "karba," an electric shock (Child Camel Jockeys: Modern Day Slavery). The children are fastened to the camels while they race, even though they often fall off and are severely injured or die. Riding on the camels permanently damages their sexual organs and the flesh on their upper legs is rubbed away as well ("Child Jockeys"). Because the children are there illegally, there is no healthcare or help provided for the injured, so many times when death could have been avoided, the child still dies. Not only are these children robbed of their childhood, they are severely, physically and psychologically tortured. Another reason why very young children are used is the fact that when scared or in pain – they scream; and the louder the child screams in pain the faster the camel to which he is strapped will run. Those who survive, bare scars of their torment and permanent disabilities. For those who do not survive, their bodies are buried in unmarked graves in the desert. These unbelievable living conditions of the children is the complete opposite to that of the camels. The animals receive copious amounts of food and water, having hospitals provided specifically for them with special equipment and medical care—camels are even provided with pools to cool off in. The children are worth next to nothing in comparison to the camels, which can cost millions of dollars.

The United Arab Emirates was the first to put a ban on child jockeys in 1993, stating they must be over fifteen years of age and weigh more than one hundred pounds (The Facts About Child Camel Jockeys). Unfortunately, there is still illegal use of children for camel jockeys in the UAE and other countries, even after the law was reinstated. The law has established that, on paper, the UAE is doing nothing wrong, so the issue is still being ignored by states. The Ansar Burney Welfare Trust International, a human and civil rights organization established in 1980 and headed by Mr. Ansar Burney, has been working a campaign to stop the use of child camel jockeys for the past sixteen years. Burney, who is also chairman of the Prisoners Aid Society and Bureau of Missing and Kidnapped Children, has rescued individually over 1,075 children as of 2006 ("Rescued Child Camel Jockeys," 2007). In 2004, the Ansar Burney Trust aired a documentary

on U.S. channel Home Box Office (HBO) which shed some light on this problem. The trust has also established a rehabilitation center for the children in Abu Dhabi established under the order of the crown prince of Dhabi. The children are rescued from the racetracks, mostly by Mr. Burney himself, and brought to the schools to be taught social roles and educated in their language, helped by doctors and treated for injuries, and seen by psychologists and physiotherapists. The school holds up to four hundred children at a time and their stay is usually four to eight weeks (Williamson). They are currently working on building more rehabilitation schools; meanwhile there are currently schools in Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Ethiopia, and other parts of the world, helping to integrate the children into the culture in which they were born.

One of the biggest problems is that these children were taken at such a young age that they do not remember where they came from. They don't know their parents, their language or their culture. As much as the rehabilitation schools help to reintegrate children back into a different life from what they knew, it is many times impossible to locate parents. Also, many times when parents are located, the children are re-sold because the parents cannot financially support them. The illegal use of children as camel jockeys not only stole their childhood away but put them in a difficult situation where they don't know where to go from here.

Although the laws are slowly becoming more and more enforced, there are still thousands of missing children and many are still being used and abused as camel jockeys in the UAE, and surrounding countries have been even less proactive in enforcing laws. The Ansar Burney Trust Welfare International has made huge steps in helping this problem, they have saved over one thousand children and are working on educating them and repatriating them. But this does not change the fact that the children bear physical, emotional and psychological scars from their childhood and are now left with nothing, not even a memory of where they came from or who their parents are.

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Collection from Rainforestation
Cairns, Australia
MEGAN DRENNAN

PHOTOGRAPHER'S NOTE: This series of photographs was taken at Rainforestation in Cairns where there is a "Pamagirri Aboriginal Experience" program. This program involves watching traditional aboriginal dance, spear and boomerang throwing, and didgeridoo playing. The aboriginal men participating paint themselves and dress in a traditional way. The aboriginal men participating paint themselves and dress in a traditional way. While it is an interesting and enlightening experience, I wonder at what point an educational program may become exploitation. Considering the historical treatment of aboriginals in Australia, it seems there is a fine line between supporting the vitality of the culture and 'selling' it. As a foreigner to the country, I found it unusual to see these westernized aboriginal men teaching visitors about their culture which, at one time, was being attacked by white settlers. There was no mention of this history, or the changes that have occurred within their cultural traditions, during the experience.





InsomnIraQ
KYLE BARRETTE

Sleep
Rest now as I waiver my head
Dream
Gather your thoughts as I count the dead
Carry them back to the surface
So they protrude through closed eyelids
Yield them to me so that I may dream too
I have lost all my ability
Sleep for me only brings darkness
Of the kind you never return
So my dry eyes now hover above
Watching, waiting, yearning
I whisper so only you can hear
Dream of godly heavens
So I may have them too
Dream of a better place
Where we both have freedom
I am scared oh sleeping one
Imagine my figure and hold me tight in your dreams
Don't let go until the bombs wake you

Why Some Countries are Unwilling to Pay for Human Rights An
Interpretation of Economic Freedom
BIEU TRAN

Many consider the idea of citizens having a set of inalienable rights and liberties as an old idea. This idea was at first implicit in the British common law but later made explicit in the American Constitution's Bill of Rights. However, the idea of all human beings having a set of inalienable rights and liberties is relatively new. Although constitutional rights and liberties are extensive, their range of coverage is merely confined within the borders of a state. Thus, the idea of human rights attempts to transcend those borders by claiming that all human beings regardless of origin, sexual orientation, ethnicity, social and economic status are entitled to a set of freedoms and meaningful options. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights issued by the United Nations approximately sixty years ago was the first global attempt with large-scale government backings aiming to raise awareness about the idea of human rights.

Many human rights scholars think that negative and positive rights are complementary to each other by claiming that such rights are indispensable, indivisible and interdependent. That is, positive rights cannot be separate from negative rights and vice versa, and neither can one set exist without the other. Other commentators are more pessimistic, as they claim that there are tradeoffs among rights in the sense that full implementation of one right might infringe or, in some cases, vitiate another. They would usually point to newly developed Asian countries as being the prime example of this tradeoff—while the government gives its citizens an adequate number of economic rights, it suppresses their rights to civil and political freedom.

In this essay, I would like to refute the claim that there is a tradeoff among rights—in particular, between civil rights and economic rights. I do not disagree that in an ideal setting, having both social and political rights and economic rights are necessary. For countries with both political and economic stability, the granting of a full set of both civil and economic rights—or in general, human rights—has a higher possibility for success. These developed countries are able to pay for the accommodation of such rights. However, in the contemporary setting where there is a higher demand for human rights in developing nations and newly developed nations, one is making a mistake to claim that the only road to achieve human rights is through having both economic and civil rights concurrently. This is rather impracticable for poor and underdeveloped countries. If resources are scarce, and rational decision makers need to make decisions mindful to the problem of scarcity, then it makes perfect sense for policy makers to select and attempt to dedicate their limited resources to a set of rights that are appropriate for their country and their people as well as

sensitive to and mindful of their history. In this sense, for poor countries, economic rights seem to lay the foundation for civil rights because the achievement of the former right allow for a bigger set of meaningful options, without which the latter rights are meaningless. Similarly, economic development provides a country with a higher ability to pay and thus gives it better means to afford the implementation of a full set of human rights. So, it is plausible to claim that a full set of economic rights provides the basis for civil rights, which does not lead to a tradeoff in the long run.

First, I will make clear the distinction between negative and positive liberties, which are necessary for the understanding of economic and civil rights. Then, I will engage in the tradeoff debate. I will revisit the problem of scarcity and the notion of the ability to pay in my argument against the tradeoff. If this demonstration succeeds, then I will be able to conclude that there is not a tradeoff between the implementation of economic and civil rights because the former ensures the meaningful existence of the latter. I will show this by appealing to counterexamples, and I think England in the early modern period and contemporary China and Singapore provide good cases.

Civil and Economic Rights

In many ways, the various topics explored during the latter half of the course have provided a glimpse of the problems that are essential to the economics of development. Issues like healthcare, malaria, ethnic conflict and the effectiveness of institutions transcend time and borders. The Western world has confronted these problems in the past. The problem of how to create institutions that would best restrain the people's unlimited appetite in a world with limited resources, resources which individuals from different ethnic groups would have to share, provides the foundation for most ethnic conflicts in the world today. The canon of economic and philosophical works that arose from this attempt to solve the twin problem of freedom and restraint have centered on the notions of positive and negative "liberties".

The concept of human rights too has its philosophical roots in positive and negative liberties. Starting from Kant, the notion of human dignity has served as the backbone for human rights. If the government views its people as ends in themselves and not as merely means, then it seems that the government has an obligation to view its people as having inherent worth and dignity. To take this further, in order to allow its citizens to maintain their inherent worth and dignity, the government has to exercise its power to ensure that they have access

to a set of meaningful options and public resources, while at the same time, the government has to provide them with some protection from things that would take away or harm their sense of worth and dignity. To make this explicit, economic rights are positive rights, or the rights to have access to resources. Some examples of economic rights include adequate healthcare, shelter, clothing, and the right to employment (Minkler 2009). In contrast, social and political rights are negative rights, or the rights to be freed from harm. Some examples of social and political rights are freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom from bondage, and freedom from ignorance and inferior preferences (Sen 2001).

Although scholars agree on these two notions, they often disagree on how best to legislate the meaning for the terms “access to” and “protection from” and the different liberties that each of the two categories of human rights entails. Some advocates of human rights demand that all citizens have access to a basic income guarantee because they believe that in order for humans to be truly free they have to have all of their basic needs secured and satisfied. In this sense, humans can pursue the goals that might grant them “higher” personal utility (pleasure) even though these pursuits might lack practical value (e.g., writing poetry for a living). Of course, the basic income guarantee has been criticized for viewing everything as a “pie in the sky.” This notion of a basic income guarantee leads to a low level of productivity because of the lack of incentives for day-to-day economic operations.

Scholars who subscribe to the philosophy of John Rawls have argued for a position that views the granting of human rights as a necessary condition for justice. That is, in the hypothetical original position citizens are merely quasi-rational beings in that they have only a concept of primary social goods—or goods that anybody in society would want like an education, healthcare, adequate food and clothing and so on. It is likely that these citizens will agree on a “principle of equal liberty” and a “difference principle” as the basis for the distribution of justice (Rawls 1971). The principle of equal liberty is Rawls’ way of providing a set of positive and negative liberties (i.e., freedom from being murdered, freedom of speech and so on), which is lexically more important and takes primacy over the difference principle or the main mechanism in Rawlsian philosophy that distributes justice. Similarly, human rights scholars who are grounded by the economic mode of thinking seek to advance their own position based on the notion of security rights, economic rights and freedoms (Shue 1996; Sen 2001; Minkler and Sweeney 2009). Minkler and Sweeney (2009) also provide an empirical argument which claims that

all basic human rights are indivisible and interdependent. In order to preserve human dignity, these economists think that security rights (derived from negative rights) and subsistence rights (derived from positive rights) ought to go hand-in-hand.

Willingness to Pay and the Problem of Scarcity

Most of the normative literatures regarding human rights have largely been indifferent to economic practicality. Advocates and scholars alike have blamed the unwillingness of governmental institutions around the world to dedicate resources to the full implementation of human rights. It is true that the unwillingness to comply with the United Nation's "Declaration of Human Rights" stems from the fact that authoritarian governments in poor countries refuse to grant civil and economic rights to their citizens in order to hold onto power and maintain a monopoly over state resources. This is certainly the case in some countries in Africa, where post-colonial dictators violate basic human rights like freedom of speech and freedom to basic necessities in life for the sake of toughening their grip. However, there is no "tradeoff" in this case because these governments totally neglect the commitment to provide any rights to its citizens whatsoever. The unwillingness that these corrupt leaders display is solely due to their complete power intoxication. In this reading, I think by "unwillingness," human rights scholars and advocates are referring to the unwillingness to pay.

In order to examine a government's willingness or unwilling to pay, I shall list some costs to very basic civil and economic rights. In order for citizens to have either positive or negative rights, or civil or economic rights, a central governing institution has to ensure that it provides a legal and institutional framework that protects and guarantees the access to such rights. For example, by granting its citizens the freedom to live a life without harm, the government has to spend a large amount of money strengthening the justice system, which includes courthouses, prisons, police officers, military forces and so on. Likewise, positive rights or, in this case, economic rights require the government to ensure that everybody at least gets a fair share of the available opportunities in the sense that citizens receive sufficient information about new jobs, a good healthcare system for when they get sick, an adequate education and job training, and some temporary safety nets for those who cannot enter the workforce or those who dropped out of it against their will. In truth, the implementation of civil and economic rights is costly. Therefore, critics who point to the unwillingness to pay should look more closely into a government's

ability to pay as a way to understand why the implementation of a full list of human rights is very difficult to achieve.

A government's ability to pay for the implementation of human rights determines its willingness to do so. Assume that a government has a genuine desire to grant its citizens with a full set of civil and economic rights and in theory, they are willing to pay a lot of money and dedicate a lot of state resources to this mission; however, this government is poor and underdeveloped and its ability to pay for the implementation of this plan is markedly lower than its willingness to pay. This is classic problem of scarcity. Even though a government would prefer to give its citizens a thorough set of social and economic rights, scarcity of resources will only allow it to pick and choose those that are most relevant, most effective, and most appropriate to the history of its people. Many people would assume that this selective effort by the government leads to a tradeoff among rights. This tradeoff goes against the first premise that rights are not indivisible and interdependent, then one cannot consider such rights to be legitimate human rights and neither can one consider them sufficient in preserving human dignity. Although I think that this argument is plausible, it is not sound because there are counterexamples.

Counterexamples

Historical events can act as counterexamples to the claim that civil and economic rights must exist interdependently. England prior to the early modern period was a society in which the ordinary servant-class had no other rights except for mere subsistence because feudal lords prevented the labor market from functioning. Events like the Industrial Revolution and the emergence of the factory system started the process of economic development in England, which kick-started a period of unprecedented economic growth. With this, even the lower class peasants started to have more negotiating power and more meaningful options in society. An increased salary allowed them to enjoy the goods of a newly developed innovative and mass manufacture-based society that was early modern England. To be sure, they did not have the civil and economic rights that we have today, but certainly they were freer financially and physically to pursue things other than activities that would provide only the subsistence. In this sense, the economic rights that were granted to citizens in England at this time provided a basis for the development of other civil rights that came shortly after. For instance, even though Britain is now a beacon for democracy, universal suffrage did not exist but slavery did—the latter abolished in 1833 at the height of the economic growth period.

In short, for the case of England, economic growth kick-started the process through which human rights can take roots and grow. Of course, such a process is slow and gradual.

Similarly, Asian countries like China and Singapore also prove to be effective counterexamples to this argument. Their experiences have shown that economic rights take primacy over civil rights. In the case of Communist China, economic growth has created more freedom for ordinary people who otherwise would be subject to radical centralized rule. Even though the Chinese model of economic development does not take into account civil and political rights, some economists believe that economic freedom will eventually bring civil and political freedoms (Friedman). Outsiders consider Singapore as a nation-state that is lacking civil freedom even though it has become, in recent years, one of the wealthiest countries on earth. Critics would point to the lack of freedom of speech and expression as the source of human rights deficiency in Singapore (e.g. a ban on chewing gum and spitting). However, if economic freedom provides a set of meaningful options for people's pursuit of their respective vision of the good life, even though Singaporeans lack the freedom to criticize the government and so on, their "basket" of economic freedoms somewhat compensate for the loss in some of their civil freedoms. Singaporeans receive a world-class bilingual education (English and their mother tongue) with one of the most qualified workforces in Asia, if not the world, and it has one of the highest GDPs per capita. Thus, the larger basket of economic freedoms allows Singaporeans to lead better lives and to have increasingly more negotiating power over their civil freedoms. In this sense, economic freedom also paves the way for civil and political freedom and this indeed is not a tradeoff.

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Political Satire & Las Abuelas
Taken June 2009
DANIELLE ALLEN

PHOTOGRAPHER'S NOTE:

Political Satire

While in Buenos Aires, Argentina, I was walking and heard loud music and drumming. I followed the noise expecting some sort of outdoor festival and came to a protest instead. Hundreds of people with many different organizations were protesting the mayor of Buenos Aires and the lack of funding for schools, hospitals, the poor, etc. What seemed like a normal protest then turned into a play featuring acrobats, a band and actors, reenacting in a comical manner the way the mayor treats doctors, teachers, etc., and how he corruptly uses the police force. The protest was like nothing I have ever experienced before, more like a well organized street party than political unrest. It gave me a completely new perspective on the use of protest and the ability to organize.

Las Abuelas

This photograph was taken in Buenos Aires, Argentina in June 2009. During the Argentine dirty war thousands of people disappeared under the Junta regime. The mothers and grandmothers of these people stood up against the tide of oppression and protested, demanding their loved ones back. The Mothers Of The Plaza De Mayo still march once a week to keep the memory and spirit of their children alive and I was lucky enough to experience the protest while I was in Argentina.



Rosi
MARIE ANZALONE

AUTHOR'S NOTE: This is a true story. It does not nearly adequately capture what this was like, but will have to do for now. It needed to be written. Marie Anzalone is the pen-name of a returned Peace Corps Volunteer and UConn staff member, and the following is a true story about a series of events that occurred in Siete Pinos, Guatemala, 2003. "Rosi" is excerpted from the short narrative "What Value a Life?" which may be read online at the following web address: <http://www.writerscafe.org/writing/hauntedfox/443653/>

I was preparing to go spend the day at the office when Stacy came knocking at the door. "Come quickly", she said, "It's Daniela. Bring your medicines"

"What?" I asked, taken somewhat aback. "What kind of animal is it that's hurt?" I inquired. The only thing I knew she had were chickens and typically you don't call the vet when a chicken is hurt or ill, unless it's all of them.

"It's actually... her daughter"

I stared at her. You've got to be kidding me, right? I was an animal field technician, doing my best to cover a veterinarian's job in this place. When I took the assignment, they'd issued me two books—"Where There is No Vet", a field manual for emergency veterinary medicine in the third world, and the corresponding title, "Where There is No Doctor". The doctor was now...me... as the person available who had the most medical training.

Stacy filled me in as we walked to Daniela's house. Her little girl, Rosalita, was three years old. Rosi had been helping her mom cook in the kitchen, and tend the baby, when she accidentally pulled a pot of boiling water off the fire and onto her face, neck and back. She'd been pretty severely burned, from what I could gather.

I steelled myself for what I was about to see, and did a mental checklist in my head. I expected a fresh severe second-degree burn, a shrieking, frightened child, a scared mother. My Spanish was not very good yet, and I needed Stacy to translate for me. Before I could treat the child, my toughest challenge I thought would be to gain the mother's trust. I was very new in town.

Daniela opened the door, crying. "Ella esta enferma" she repeated,, over and over, "Ay Dios, no se lo que puedo hacer!" (She's sick, My God, I don't know what I can do")

The child was not much bigger than an 18 month-old in the States. She was listless, subdued, ashy colored. There was a dirty towel wrapped around her shoulder. She had a festering wound on the side of her little cheek. I looked sharply at the mother, and asked, in Spanish, "When did this happen?"

“Hace un mes, mas o menos”

A MONTH ago? A Month?

“Has visitado un doctor?”

“No puedo—por mi bebe” (“I can’t—for my baby”)

I had to push anger and judgment aside in my mind. I looked at Stacy. It was obvious to me that Rosi was very sick. I hadn’t even examined the burn site yet. “Stacy, I’m going to need you to talk them both through this, all right? I can smell from here that the wound is infected, and I don’t know what I’m going to find. But it’s clear that child will need a doctor, not just First Aid. I may be able to help her, but she will need more than what I can do, and you’re going to have to convince Daniela, okay?”

Stacy nodded, and swallowed. “I’ll do what I can.” She said a few sentences to Daniela, and assured the woman she could trust me.

“Necesito quitar la blusa y toalla” I said. (I need to remove her blouse and towel). Daniela nodded, crying. We moved around the side of the house, for privacy, and for light. The inside of the house was too dim. It was the dry season, and everything was covered in a fine layer of silt. “Tambien, necesito agua”

I waited for Daniela to return with a palangana (little plastic bowl) of water. Then, I removed Rosi’s blouse, and carefully unwound the makeshift bandage. I heard Stacy give a small scream, and pushed it out of my mind to focus on what was in front of me. The girl’s back was fully one-third covered with a suppurating wound, blackened, infected, oozing, and gangrenous where the flesh had died and rotted. At the center, the injury was ½” deep, like a crater, where the water had burned the worst. Dear God in Heaven, this child needs a doctor. The doctor was in the hospital two hours away, where she would not be guaranteed treatment, because she was a Maya. There was no certitude of a doctor—all she had was me. I had to act on this knowledge. The force of what I was looking at hit me like a sucker punch.

“Stacy, I can’t remember any Spanish right now” I whispered, near tears. I need you to translate for me, okay hon?”

“I don’t know if I can”

I looked up, and she was about to faint. This brought me back to my own senses. “Stacy” I said sharply. “I need you! Snap out of it!”

She shook her head, and sat down. She was crying. I looked her in the eyes, as I needed her help. I couldn’t do this alone. I waited for her to come back into focus, and I put her to work. I spoke slowly, “Tell Daniela I need to... remove big areas of skin. Its going to be... agonizing. For all of us”

Stacy slowly regained her composure, and chose her words very carefully.

“Tell her I need her to hold her daughter down while I do it”

“Then I need her to boil water to sterilize a towel”

“Then, this girl will need antibiotics”

I met the child’s gaze- trying to make myself empathize with how scared and hurting she was, and knowing that I had to hurt her more. That I had nothing to adequately control pain. “Rosi? I need to do something right now, and it’s going to hurt. You need to hold as still as you can for me, okay, darling?” My Spanish was coming back a little. Enough for her to trust me. I gave her an ibuprofen, and looked in my veterinary supply kit. I had about two CC’s of lidocaine. It had to be enough. I soaked a gauze pad in lidocaine, and dabbed in gently on the outer edges of the wound. Rosi winced under my touch, and I quickly ascertained the extent of the nerve damage.

I drew in my breath, and picked up another sterile gauze pad, and opened my chlorhexiderm scrub—the strongest stuff I had. Cold surgical sterilant.

I started in the middle of her back, where the flesh was dead. I sterilized my pocketknife in a lighter flame, cooled in sterilant, and scraped away chunks of blackened, putrefying skin, a little at a time. The skin underneath was reddish pink scar tissue, inflamed. I washed carefully with gauze soaked in chlorhexiderm, working from the inside outwards to the edge. I simply numbed my mind while I did it. In the center the little girl did not notice what I was doing at all- the nerve endings had been completely destroyed by the depth of the burn. She would probably never regain feeling there.

I worked slowly, and deliberately. I asked Stacy to talk to me, to talk to the child, to talk to the mother. Please, help keep her mind off what I am doing here. I heard her ask why the mother has waited so long to seek treatment, and caught enough of the story to be stunned and have to periodically stop what I was doing, because my hands were shaking so badly. As I peeled away layers of dead skin, I let the implications of the words fall in a cloud around me, wrap me in their power, and leave me as breathless as the barnyard stench of the rotting flesh in front of me.

"My husband, he left me for another woman two months ago, and is not coming back"

"I live on the charity of my in-laws—I have no money"

"If I go to doctor, he tell everyone I am a bad mother, they take Rosi away"

"I go to curandero (shaman) and he give me herbs but say she will not recover until my baby is delivered. If she recover before then, my baby die"

"He also say, cannot trust doctor, medicines of science bad for the spirit, will steal my child's soul"

I had not realized Daniela was pregnant. These women are small and round, inherently, and they wrap themselves in skirts and aprons and blankets and towels. It can be impossible to tell until they are in their sixth month or so. There is a belief that if a child gets ill, the spirit of the unborn baby is also in danger. If the child recovers, the baby will die. The unborn are more revered than the living here, too. It was a set of beliefs that I simply could not force my mind around, no matter what.

I continued to debride the infection, and I thought about what I was doing. As I moved towards the edge, Rosi started feeling it, even with the lidocaine having had time to sink in. I motioned for her mother to hold her, tight, while Rosi started whimpering, then crying, then shrieking. I continued to clean away pus, black skin, necrosis. The sounds of her distress pounded in my soul as I worked. "I know honey, I know, I'm so sorry, so very very sorry" I kept repeating, in a singsong, soothing but trembling voice, as I worked as efficiently as I could. I'm pretty sure Stacy vomited- she had to walk away, tears streaming, and she looked pretty ill. I couldn't think about her.

Finally, finally, it was done, three hours later. The child's back looked like it had been flayed. The edges of the excision were ragged, and oozing. We waved away flies. I applied triple antibiotic ointment to the edges, where the wound was wet, but left the center to dry. I asked for a clean towel. I used all the gauze I had to pack the wound, then laid the clean towel over the area. I wrapped it round with two Ace bandages.

Then came the argument with Daniela, "you need to take her to the doctor. At least, the man in town who has the pharmacy" (there was person trained in advanced First Aid in the next village, who had a small stock of basic medicines, and was not well liked).

"There is no money" I gave her what was left in my pocket "This will buy medicine"

"He will think I'm a bad mother"

"He will give me medicines that will not work"

At this point even mild-mannered Stacy was angry, and said what I could not bring myself to. "Rosi will die of infection if she does not get the medicine she needs"

I looked in my kit. I had a bottle of injectable penicillin, veterinary grade. I had no dosing tables for humans, and would have to travel 4 hours to look it up. I realized I might have to. I might have to trust a child's life with the same medicine I've been injecting into cows, reusing needles because I cannot afford enough for one-time use. The thought made me very uneasy- until I realized I could possibly walk into the store and buy a new bottle if I had to. Hell, I could walk over to the doctor myself and buy what she needed. It would be the last of my meager allowance, but I had more coming in, and Daniela did not.

Daniela thanked us for our help. In English, I told Stacy that if I had to, I would give Rosi an injection myself, or see if the doctor would sell me a bottle of penicillin for her, but we had to give the mother the choice to do the right thing.

Something we said got through to her, as Daniela took the child to the man at the pharmacy, the one she didn't trust. He was furious with her, and gave her a scolding she never forgot. Without our intervention, and the antibiotics he gave her, Rosalita would have succumbed to systemic infection within 3 days. He examined my work,

and said there was nothing more anyone could do there- now we just had to make sure the medicines had a chance to work.

I recently had to leave the corporate environment, because when I open my eyes and look around, there is no-one there can adequately answer my simple question, “what value a life?”

There was talk of the bottom line and meeting production goals. There was camaraderie and problem-solving. We were producing animals for life-saving research- a very worthwhile endeavor. Yet when I heard the words, “profit margin” I envisioned medical supplies, outbuildings, schools, vitamins. Something quite different than 99% of the people I worked with. And if I ask the question, “what value that baby’s life, once she is born and brought into this world?”, I could have counted on one hand the ones who might have said, “the same as my own, of course. the same as my own.”

Thank you, Daniela, for being the kalya-mittra who made me face my own feelings of inadequacy, so that I may not let them stand in the way of trying to still do good works, and try to inspire others who want to learn. I have so much further to go, but I will never forget you, and what you taught me. Three times, you crossed my path, and each time, the slamming force of the distance between my reality and yours hits me like a ton of bricks. You keep me honest.

COLOPHON

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